

## Let Us Know

If you have a story to contribute to Crossroads, please fax a press release or fact sheet to Jill Smolinski, *Crossroads* Editor, at (213) 236-1803. Submissions must be received by the tenth of the month prior to the publication issue.

*We're looking for the next Picasso of the peewee set! Kids can earn prizes including cassette players, bike flags and more when they send in artwork for Earth Day by March 1. ETCs can win, too. Call your account executive or (213) 236-1984 for details and an entry form.*

## 20 strategies for ridesharing that will boost results without busting your budget



A rideshare program doesn't have to be expensive to be effective. In fact, one of the best strategies—distributing RideGuides—is free. Here, the commute experts at Southern California Rideshare outline some low- or no-cost ideas for promoting ridesharing:

- 1. Stick to the facts**—many rideshare programs rely on distributing information (carpool partners, transit schedules) rather than offering gifts or prizes.
- 2. Keep employees on-site** by offering direct deposit.
- 3. Piggyback rideshare promotions** on existing efforts. If you usually host an annual company picnic, for example, give it a rideshare theme.
- 4. Use the barter system** to gather prizes for employees who rideshare. You can meet other employers at network meetings.
- 5. Designate prime parking spaces** for carpoolers and vanpoolers.

**6. Help set up vanpools**, establishing fares that reimburse all costs.

**7. Distribute Park & Ride lot maps** to your employees that show where they can park and catch a carpool, bus or train the rest of the way to work. Call your account executive for free maps.

**8. Give time off with pay** as an incentive for ridesharers.

**9. Take the worry out of ridesharing** with a guaranteed ride home program. Cut costs by using company vehicles or arranging rides home with other staff members.

**10. Stop paying for parking.**

**11. Let employees work flexible hours**, which reduces rush-hour traffic and may resolve scheduling conflicts for some potential carpoolers.

**12. Sell transit passes** on site.

**13. Add a rideshare reminder** to paychecks or other in-house documents.

**14. Post a list of on-site amenities**, such as dry cleaners, banking, shopping, etc. so employees don't need their cars for errands on the way home.

**15. Offer telecommuting** in which employees can work at home occasionally but must provide their own equipment.

**16. Distribute RideGuide commute planners** to all employees.

**17. Offer a transportation allowance** instead of free parking, which encourages ridesharing because it gives all employees the same benefit regardless of how they choose to get to work.

**18. If your employees have access to the Internet**, refer them to the commuter web site at <http://www.scag.ca.gov/commute>. They can get an instant bus itinerary, register for a RideGuide and more.

**19. Urge employees to post "riders wanted"** cards in their offices to help set up carpools. Cards are available free from your account executive.

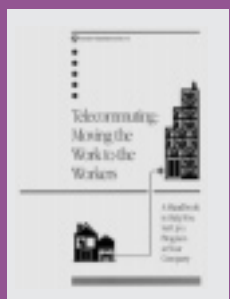
**20. Be sure to take advantage of "freebies"** offered, such as handbooks, giveaway items, and others. *Crossroads* lists low or no-cost opportunities for your commute program each month or contact your account executive. 🚗

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## Telecommuting Handbook

Telecommuting can boost productivity and save your company money on overhead expenses. Learn how to put a telecommuting program in place, from gathering management support to training employees. 73 pages. To order, send \$8 plus \$5.50 in shipping & handling to Southern California Rideshare Telecommuting Handbook, 611 W. Sixth St., 37th Fl., Los Angeles, CA 90017, attn: Order Dept.



# Promotional Ideas for February through March

**G**et your rideshare program in gear for the year. Here, some suggestions for in-house events:

### Earth Day Artwork

**Contest.** Be sure to send in your employees' kids' artwork by March 1 for prizes. Call your account executive or (213) 236-1984 for details and an entry form.



**Groundhog Day.** If a groundhog sees his shadow Feb. 2, there will be six more weeks of winter. Give a twist to this holiday by calling it Roadhog Day (your logo could show the words in a red circle with a diagonal line through it). Employees who rideshare on Monday, Feb. 3 qualify for a drawing in which they receive a small reward for six weeks—such as candy each day, an extra 15 minute break, or the best seat at the weekly staff meeting.

**Valentine's Day.** Hand out boxes of heart-shaped cinnamon candies to ridesharers with a note that says your company is "red hot" for ridesharing!

**Company Marathon.** Challenge employees to keep track of the miles they walk to work or to their local transit station. If they hit 26 miles by the date of the LA Marathon on

March 2, they'll win a prize, such as walking shoes or socks. You can also set up "walkpools," pairing up people who live near each other to walk together to the office.

### Think Green for St. Patrick's Day.

Help employees make the connection between ridesharing and the environment. Draw or trace a shamrock on a piece of paper and write in each leaf the words "recycle," "re-use" and "rideshare." Photocopy it onto green paper and give one to each employee. Ridesharers turn it in on March 17 to be entered in a drawing for a green plant or other prize. Hold the drawing at a party where you serve green bagels or cookies.

### Pot o' Gold.

Also for St. Patrick's Day: invite ridesharers to stop by your office to choose gold chocolate coins from a "pot at the end of the rainbow." (Check party supply stores for a pot, or make your own by covering a plastic bowl with foil. If you really want to get creative, set it next to poster board on which you've drawn a rainbow.) Paint a tiny green dot on one of the coins—the employee who picks it gets a small prize.



### Go Fly a Kite.

Celebrate clean air by challenging employees to construct or decorate kites in a rideshare theme. Award prizes, then take the kites out to a nearby park or parking lot for a noontime fly-a-thon!



## A Reminder for Your Tax Returns

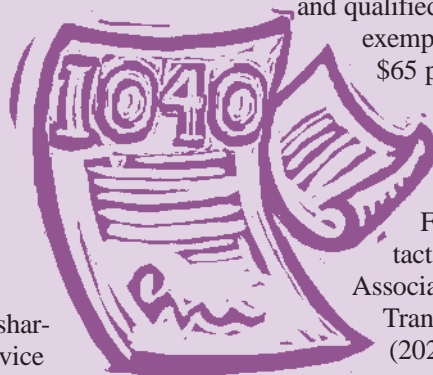
Some changes in tax laws for 1996:

■ The State of California no longer allows rideshare tax credits for 1996 returns. Tax credits had been given to employees who vanpool and to employers for the cost of buying or leasing vanpool vehicles and subsidizing transit passes.

■ On a happier note for ridesharers, the Internal Revenue Service has raised the cap for rideshare benefits by \$5 over last year. This means that

employer-provided mass transit subsidies and qualified vanpool benefits are now exempt from gross income up to \$65 per month. Employer-paid parking is now exempt from gross income up to \$165 per month.

For more information, contact your tax consultant or the Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) at (202) 393-3497.



## Idea Exchange

*Do you have an idea for a contest or promotion with a holiday theme? Fax us details at (213) 236-1803, attn: Crossroads Editor.*

## Freebies for ETCs

Send for your free guide:  
**Local Government Parking  
Management Handbook:  
Using Demand-Based  
Parking Strategies to Meet  
Community Goals** (June,  
1996, 58 pages). Learn  
ways to bridge the gap  
between parking policies  
on a local and regional  
level. Call Michael  
Kodama Planning  
Consultants at  
(818) 846-6272.

## Directions on the Web

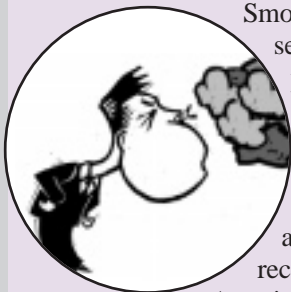
Commuters can now get  
detailed street directions on  
the Southern California  
Rideshare web site  
([www.scag.ca.gov/commute](http://www.scag.ca.gov/commute)). "It's part of our  
effort to make this site the  
transportation resource for  
the region," says Lionel  
Wong, information systems  
specialist for Southern  
California Rideshare.  
Commuters who access the  
site can also get detailed  
transit itineraries, travel  
tips, and register for a  
RideGuide commute  
planner.

**Idea for ETCs:** Omnitrans  
in San Bernardino recently  
held a banquet honoring  
the 16 new members of its  
Club 200—the transit  
agency's employees who  
share the ride at least 200  
days during the year. Each  
honoree received a \$50 US  
Savings Bond and a  
certificate of achievement.



# Bits & Pieces: Smog Is Behind 1 in 10 Emergency Visits...and More News

## Out of Breath



Smog was responsible for  
sending thousands of  
people to emergency  
rooms and hospitals  
in Los Angeles dur-  
ing the city's peak  
smog season in 1993,  
according to a report  
recently released by the  
American Lung Association.

Of 13 US cities studied, Los Angeles had the  
highest rate of emergency room visits for res-  
piratory problems—up to 10 percent of total  
visits, or roughly 10,845 visits were attributed  
to smog.

## Fast CAT

The City of Camarillo last month introduced  
CAT: Camarillo Area Transit, which includes  
Dial-a-Ride and fixed-route regular bus ser-  
vice. Standard one-way fare is \$1. For  
route and schedule information, call  
(805) 988-4CAT.

## EPA & Ozone

At a November news conference, the US  
Environmental Protection Agency announced  
two proposals that would greatly tighten air

quality standards for ground-level ozone and  
particulate matter. For more information, con-  
tact the EPA at (919) 541-0557 or on the  
Internet at <http://www.epa.gov/airlinks>.

## El Toro is “Y’d” Open

Additional carpool lanes on the El Toro Y/I-5  
are now open, according to the Orange County  
Transportation Authority. Carpoolers can now  
travel the freeway between South Orange  
County and destinations along I-5, I-405, State  
Routes 55 and 57 (via the I-5 transitway).

## \$500 for Vanpoolers

A vanpool that  
commutes 150  
miles a day (from  
Palmdale to  
Torrance) is the first  
winner of a \$500 prize as part of the HOV  
Vanpool Commuter Rider Rebate Program. The  
program offers \$100 rebates to new vanpoolers  
in Los Angeles County and enters their vanpools  
in a monthly drawing for \$500 toward vanpool  
fees. For details on how to register a commuter  
or vanpool for the program, call the vanpool  
helpline at (213) 630-1551.



# Get in on the ACT

The Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) in Southern California is urging ETCs to call  
if they “have questions, concerns or ideas about how ACT can better serve its members.”  
Following is a contact list of board members:

### Name

- **Tricia Price**, president  
(contact for membership information)
- **Konya Vivante**, vice-president
- **Steve McCaughey**, secretary
- **Brian Thiele**, treasurer
- **Maeve Kennedy Grimes**, director
- **Dominic Menton**, director
- **Ed Langer**, director
- **Mike Kodama**, director
- **Linda Marle Pipitone**, director
- **Aaron Hanson**, immediate past president

### Organization

- Southern California Rideshare
- Culver City Transit
- Irvine Spectrum TMA
- Bank of America
- Traffic Solutions
- Hertz
- Los Angeles County MTA
- MRK Planning Consultants
- County of Riverside
- 12th Council District TMA

### Phone

- (805) 656-2477
- (310) 253-6544
- (714) 753-1287
- (213) 345-5744
- (805) 568-2917
- (310) 568-5185
- (213) 922-4680
- (818) 846-6272
- (909) 275-1175
- (818) 882-5522

# Calendar

## • Ventura County

ETC Network meeting is **Feb. 18** at 10 a.m. Call Alan Holmes at (805) 656-2477.

## • Westlake, Agoura, Calabasas

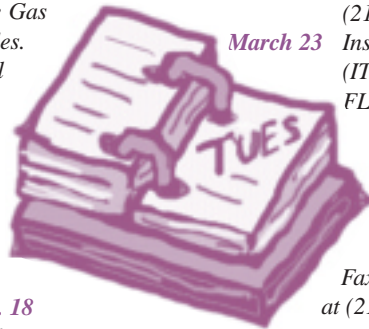
ETC Network meeting is **Feb. 19** at 10 a.m. Call Alan Holmes at (805) 656-2477.

## • Downtown LA/ Mid-Wilshire

The LA T.E.A.M. will hold its next network meeting **Tuesday, March 4**, at the Gas Company in downtown Los Angeles. New members are welcome. Call Jeannie Keene at (213) 236-1965.

## • Airport Area

The Westchester/LAX Transportation Management Association will hold a meeting for existing and new members **Feb. 18 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.** Call Judith Ciancimino at (310) 410-2999.



## • San Gabriel Valley

The San Gabriel Valley network meeting is **Feb. 4** at the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority facility in El Monte. Call Teresa Milliken at (213) 236-1999.

## • Conferences

**Feb. 19-21** The third annual Government Conference the Environment, Sacramento Convention Center. Call (916) 334-2495.

**March 2** LA Marathon Health Fair, Los Angeles Convention Center. Call (213) 741-1151.

**March 27** Southern California Association of Governments' general assembly, Desert Springs Marriott Palm Desert. Call (213) 236-1878.

**March 23** Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) International Conference, Tampa, FL. Call the ITE at (202) 554-8050.

## • Planning an Event of Interest to Employers?

Fax information to Crossroads at (213) 236-1803, attn. Editor.

**Pete Wilson**  
Governor, State of California

**Dean R. Dunphy**  
Secretary, Business, Transportation and Housing Agency

**James W. van Loben Sels**  
Director, Caltrans

**Ken Steele**  
District Director, Caltrans District 7

**Frank L. Quon**  
Chief, Division of Operations, Caltrans District 7

**Stan Lisiewicz**  
District Director, Caltrans District 8

**Walt Hagen**  
Interim District Director, Caltrans District 12

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## CROSSROADS

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For subscription information or to change your Crossroads mailing address, contact your Southern California Rideshare account executive at the rideshare office nearest you or Karen Wilson at (213) 236-1984. Southern California Rideshare is a department of the Southern California Association of Governments.

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Southern California Association of Governments Officers:

Dick Kelly, President, and Mayor, City of Palm Desert; Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, First Vice President and Supervisor, County of Los Angeles; Bob Bartlett, Second Vice President and Mayor, City of Monrovia; and Bob Buster, Immediate Past President and Supervisor, County of Riverside.

## Southern California Rideshare Offices

**Los Angeles**  
611 West Sixth Street, 37th Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90017-3127  
Business: (213) 236-1801

**Northern Los Angeles**  
704 E. Palmdale Blvd.  
Palmdale, CA 93550  
Business: (805) 273-2425

**Ventura**  
950 County Square Dr., Suite 101  
Ventura, CA 93003  
Business: (805) 656-2477

## Inland Empire Commuter Services

1746 Spruce St.  
Riverside, CA 92517-2780  
Business:  
In Riverside (909) 341-9230  
In San Bernardino (909) 884-5459

## Commuter Information:

1-800-COMMUTE  
<http://www.scag.ca.gov>  
<http://www.scag.ca.gov/commute>

